As far as coal mining is concerned, the Department of Coal has introduced a Bill, namely the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2000 in the Rajya Sabha on 24.4.2004 to amend the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973. This Bill seeks to allow commercial mining of coal any Indian company both in public sector and private sector. At present coal mining in India is allowed to Indian companies under the existing provisions of law. Under the Coal Mines (Notionalisation) Act, 1973 coal mining is exclusively reserved for the public sector. By an amendment to the Act in 1976, two exceptions to this policy were introduced *viz.* (i) captive mining by private companies engaged in production of iron and steel and (ii) sub-lease for coal mining to private parties in isolated small pockets not amenable to economic development and not requiring rail transport, were allowed. The Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 was amended with effect from 9.6.1993 to allow private sector participation in coal Mining for generation of power, etc. as laid down in section 3(1)(iii) of Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 in additon to the existing provision for the production of iron and steel. Mining of Coal for production of cement has also been permitted by the Government *vide* notification dated 15.3.96.

(b) and (c) For non-fuel and non-atomic minerals, the above mentioned National Mineral Policy is equally applicable to all States in the country. In so far as coal is concerned, the State Government are allowed commercial mining of coal through their undertakings which are authorized by their Articles of Association to do mining of coal and lignite. Any Indian company can apply for working of coal reserve in any State for captive mining of coal for power generation, iron and steel production and cement production keeping into account the quality and quantity of coal reserve available in the State.

Losses to ECL, BCCL and CCL

†2399. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether E.C.L., B.C.C.L., AND C.C.L., are suffering lossess continuously for the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) in what manner Government contemplate to solve this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) and Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) have been suffering losses. Central Coalfields Limited (CCL) has suffered loss in 2001-02, but made profit in 2002-03 and is expected to earn profit in 2003-04 also.

The profit (+)/loss (-) in ECL, BCCL and CCL during the last three years is given below:—

(Rs. in crore)

Company	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04 (Provisional)
ECL	-277.64 -	-338.78 -	-322.98 -
BCCL	755.00 -	507.13	556.88
CCL	108.32	+384.65	+428.68

(c) ECL and BCCL stand referred to the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) for their revival. In addition, some of the steps taken to make these coal companies profitable include:—

(i) Increasing production using intermediate technology like Side Discharge Loader (SDL)/Load Haul Dumper (LHDs).

(ii) Increase in productivity both for men and machines

(iii) Regulation controllable cost

(iv) Improvement in quality

(v) Agreement with equipment supplier on gain/loss sharing basis

(vi) Rationalization of manpower

(vii) Close liaison with State Governments for speedy acquisition of land for existing as well as new projects.

(viii) New locals have been identified in ECL and BCCL for introduction of high productive technology like powered support longwall and continuous miners etc.